
Office of Utilities Regulation

Consumer Affairs Unit

Quarterly Performance Report

2024 July - September

Publication Date: 2024 December 06



OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION

36 Trafalgar Road, Kingston 10

Consumer Affairs Unit Quarterly Performance Report

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The Role and Objectives of the OUR

The Office of Utilities Regulation Act of 1995 established the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) as a body corporate. Under the Act, the OUR is charged with regulating the provision of utility services in the electricity, telecommunications and water and sewerage sectors. The objectives are to:

- Ensure that consumers of utility services enjoy an acceptable quality of service at a reasonable cost.
- Establish and maintain transparent, consistent and objective rules for the regulation of utility service providers.
- Promote the long-term efficient provision of utility services for national development consistent with Government policy.
- Provide an avenue of appeal for consumers who have grievances with the utility service providers.
- Work with other related agencies to promote a sustainable environment, and act independently and impartially.

The Consumer and Public Affairs Department

The OUR discharges its mandate to protect utility consumers through the Consumer and Public Affairs (CPA) Department. The Consumer Affairs Unit, the Public Affairs Unit (PAU) and the OUR Information Centre (OURIC) comprise the CPA Department. This Department is the section of the OUR that directly interfaces with utility consumers and one of its main responsibilities is to investigate appeals of decisions made by utility service providers brought by aggrieved consumers.

The Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU)

Among other things, the CAU receives, records and processes utility consumer complaints and appeals, monitors trends in consumer complaints and provides the Office with advice on measures to improve consumer welfare.

The CAU uses, as a primary input to its policy development and advice to the Office, the results of analyses of the complaints received from customers about the services provided by the utility companies. Feedback from consumers at town meetings, public fora and the media are also key sources for opinions and activities of utility services.

A consumer survey which seeks consumer feedback on a range of consumer issues is conducted every 18 - 24 months. Additionally, a public education programme is pursued, which includes organising consultations with stakeholders on pertinent regulatory matters.

The PAU manages the public education programme, media relations and the website while the Information Centre (OURIC), *inter alia*, provides information in keeping with the requirements of the Access to Information Act. Through the CPA department, the OUR also funds the Consumer Advisory Committee on Utilities (CACU) activities, which was established to operate as an independent advocacy group providing critical feedback and support for consumer issues.

The Intent and Purpose of the Quarterly Performance Report

The Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) is prepared by the Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU) and provides the public with information and analysis about the contacts received from utility providers. The information includes the number of customer contacts received over the review period; JPS and NWC's performance against the Guaranteed Standards; utilities' responsiveness to our appeals process; and the Unit's performance against the Appeals Process timelines.

The QPR is intended to be a fair, reasonable, and transparent report of the above-mentioned activities. The statistics for each reporting period are gathered from our Customer Information Database and reflect the contacts received from utility consumers island wide. These contacts are received via various channels, namely: letters, telephone, walk-ins, e-mails, fax and social media.

Methods of Calculation

The methods of calculation used include summation, quarterly, and year-on-year comparisons. The resort latterly to normalise the number of contacts by expressing this as per customer base reflects our allowance for fair comparisons. Consequently, the report cites the number of contacts per 100,000 of the service provider's customer base. Even so, it is recognized that the telecommunications sector with its heterogeneous customer bases, presents a peculiarity for comparison with the water and electricity utilities that have more homogenous customer bases. The information should be interpreted as a sample or statistical representation of the intake to the Unit.

Requests for additional details or any comments regarding this document should be directed to:

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Executive Summary

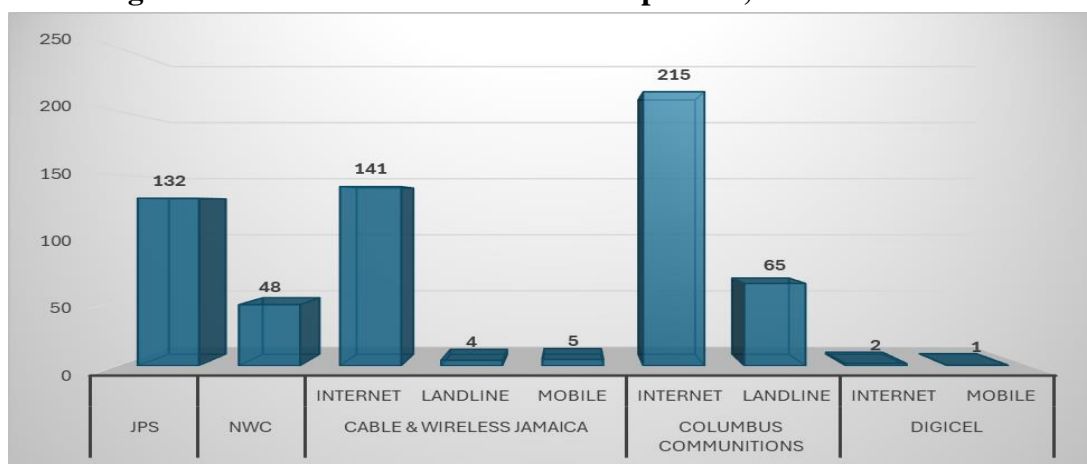
Contacts with the OUR's Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU) increased by 103% to 1,581, over the preceding quarter. The data show that the most significant increases were in the categories of *Rebate* (380%), *Interruption of Service* (320%), *Billing Matters* (116%) and *Poor Service Quality* (21%).

The following shows the distribution of contacts per service provider¹:

- Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd. (JPS) – 908 (57%)
- National Water Commission (NWC) – 256 (16%)
- Columbus Communications (Flow) – 186 (12%)
- Cable & Wireless Jamaica Ltd. (Flow) – 162 (10%)
- Digicel – 33 (2%)
- Private Water & Sewerage Service Providers and Other (Not Utility Provider Related, e.g. cable service) – 46 (3%).

While JPS at 908 accounted for the most contacts, Figure 1 shows that Columbus Communications (Flow) accounted for the highest numbers – at 215 per 100,000 – in proportion to its internet customer base.

Figure 1: Distribution of OUR contacts per 100,000 of customer base

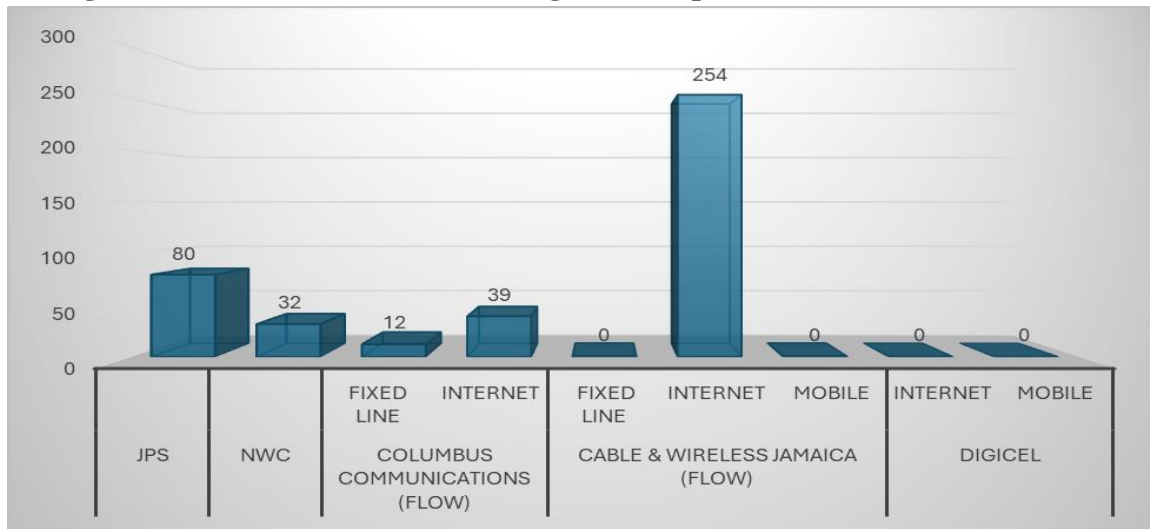


¹ Details on contact distribution per service provider can be seen in Table 7 on page 28.

Billing matters, at 50%, remained the main reason utility consumers contacted the CAU, representing a three-percentage point increase compared to the preceding quarter. JPS and NWC accounted for the highest number of billing-related matters.

As shown in Figure 2, the service providers with the highest number of billing-related contacts per 100,000 of their customer bases were: C&WJ (Flow) at 254 of its internet customer base, JPS at 80 of its customer base, Columbus Communications (Flow) at 39 its internet customer base.

Figure 2: Distribution of OUR billing contacts per 100,000 customer base



At 29% of total contacts, service interruption remained the second highest reason for customer contact with the CAU for the review period.

Chapter 1: Utilities' Responsiveness

(i) Acknowledgements

During the review period. Eleven (11) new appeals were accepted for investigation of which six (6) and five (5) related to JPS and NWC matters respectively. Requests for information (case letters) were sent for all new appeals accepted.

Based on the established Service Level Agreements (SLAs), JPS and NWC agreed to acknowledge the OUR's case letters within five (5) business days. As shown in Table 1, JPS submitted its six acknowledgements within the agreed timeline. The NWC only submitted three out of five (67%) acknowledgments which were within the agreed timeline.

Table 1: Acknowledgement within Standard (5 business days)

<i>Quarters (2024)</i>	JPS	NWC
<i>January - March</i>	N/A	83%
<i>April - June</i>	100%	67%
<i>July - September</i>	100%	60%

(ii) Response to Case Letters

Service providers are required to respond to case letters within thirty (30) business days. As is shown in Table 2, JPS attained an 83% compliance rating as while all six responses were received, one was outside of the agreed timeline. For the NWC, only three of five (60%) responses were received and within the agreed time.

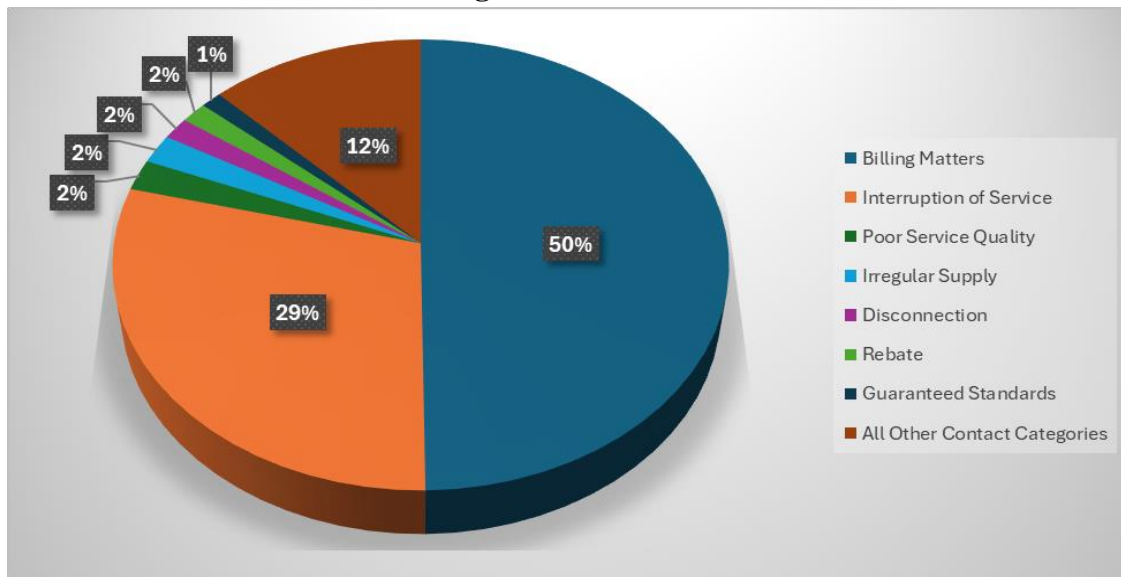
Table 2: Response to case letters within standard (30 business days)

<i>Quarters (2024)</i>	JPS	NWC
<i>January – March</i>	N/A	60%
<i>April - June</i>	100%	0%
<i>July - September</i>	83%	60%

Chapter 2: Main Customer Concerns

The main reasons for utility customers contacting the CAU during the quarter related to Billing, Interruption of Service, Poor Service Quality, Irregular Supply, Disconnection, Rebate and Guaranteed Standards, (Figure 3). Further details on all contacts distributed per category are provided in Table 8.

Figure 3: Main Concerns



(i) Billing

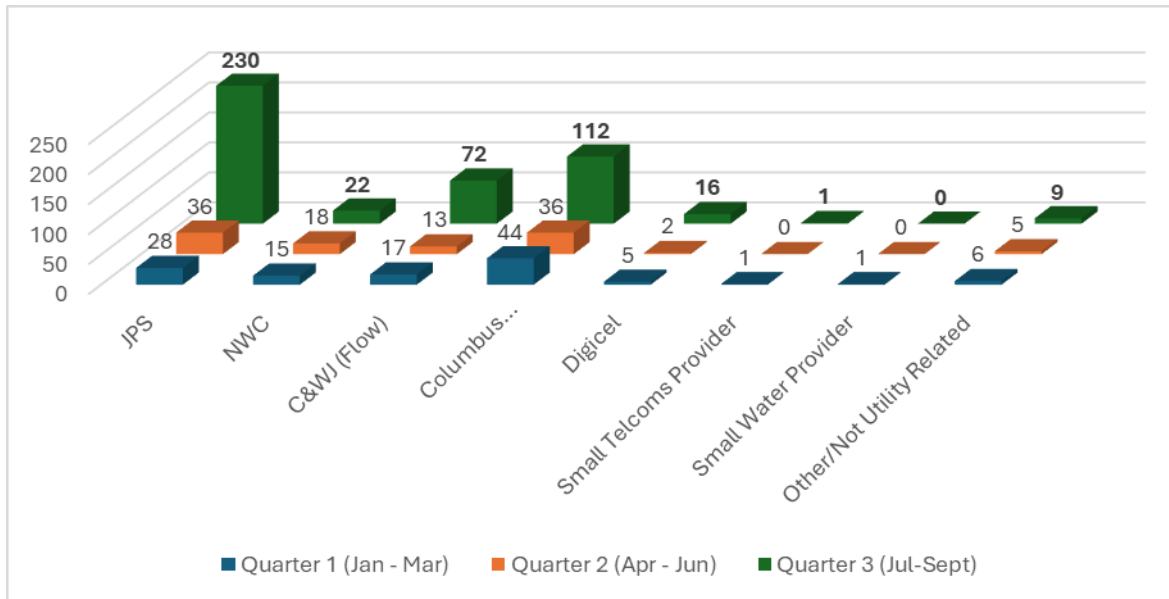
At 50%, billing matters remained the main reason for customer contacts received by the CAU. These matters included high consumption, disputed charges, adjustments to customers' accounts, and estimated billing. Some of the billing matters, specifically high consumption and estimated billing, related to Hurricane Beryl.

JPS and NWC continued to account for the most billing contacts with 549 (35%) and 169 (11%), respectively. Columbus Communications (Flow), C&WJ (Flow), Digicel, Small Water/Sewerage Service Providers, Small Telecommunications Providers and Other/Not Utility Related (e.g. cable) accounted for the remaining 59 (4%).

(ii) Interruption of Service

Service interruption contacts increased by fifteen percentage points, to 29%, when compared to the preceding quarter. As seen in Figure 4, JPS and Columbus Communications (Flow) with 230 (15%) and 112 (7%) respectively, accounted for the highest number of related contacts. C&WJ (Flow) followed with 72 (5%) while NWC, Digicel, Small Telecommunications Provider and Other/Not Utility Related accounted for the remaining 48 (2%) of contacts.

Figure 4: Quarterly Service Interruption Contacts



(iii) Poor Service Quality

Poor service quality contacts decreased by two percentage points, to 2% or 35, over the preceding quarter. Columbus Communications (Flow) (10), JPS (9), C&WJ (Flow) (8), NWC (6), and Digicel (2) accounted for these contacts.

(iv) Irregular Supply

Irregular supply contacts decreased by two percentage points to 2% of total contacts with JPS and NWC each accounting for 1%.

(v) Disconnection

Disconnection contacts decreased by two percentage points, to 2% or 25, over the preceding quarter. C&WJ (Flow) (7), JPS, NWC, Columbus Communications each with 5 and Digicel,

Small Telecommunications Providers and Other/Not Utility Related each with 1 accounted for these contacts.

(vi) Rebate

Rebate accounted for 2% of total contacts with C&WJ (Flow) and Columbus Communications (Flow) each having a share of 1%.

Chapter 3: Guaranteed Standards Performance

(i) What are the Guaranteed Standards?

The Guaranteed Standards (GS) are performance measures that guide the provision of utility services delivered by JPS, NWC, and small water and sewerage service providers. If the companies fail to honour the agreement, the affected customer is entitled to compensation, which is applied as a credit to their utility account.

(ii) How are customers compensated?

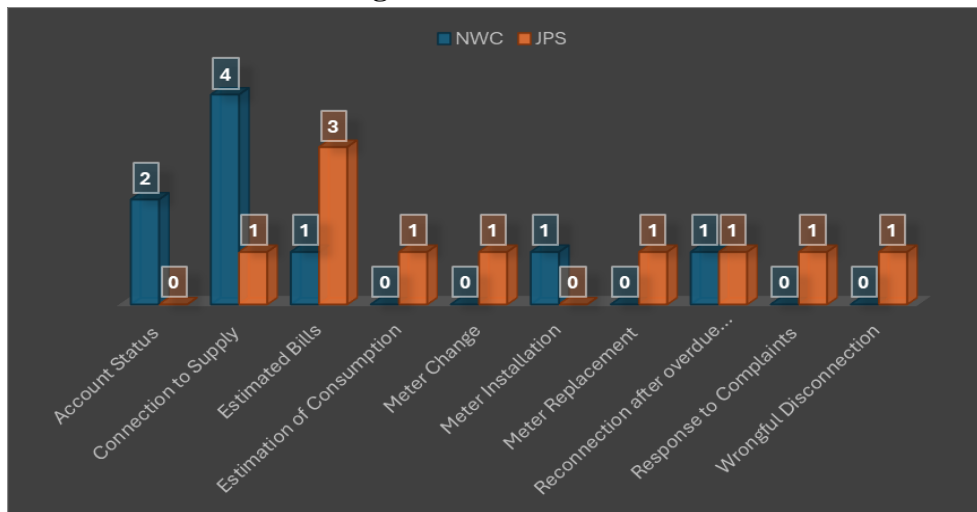
NWC: Compensation for a breach of a standard is four (4) times the applicable service charge OR six (6) times the service charge for those in the special compensation category. Where applicable, customers must submit their claims within 120 days of the breach. Breaches of individual standards will attract compensation of up to six (6) periods of non-compliance.

JPS: Residential customers: equivalent to the reconnection fee. Commercial customers: four (4) times the customer charge. Breaches of individual standards will attract compensation of up to eight (8) periods of non-compliance.

(iii) Quarterly report on breaches

Nineteen (19) contacts were received from JPS and NWC customers concerning alleged breaches of the GS, representing one percent (1%) of the total contacts received. JPS and NWC accounted for ten (10) and nine (9) contacts respectively.

As is seen in Figure 5, *Estimated Bills* accounted for the highest number of contacts about alleged breaches of the GS for JPS. For the NWC, *Connection to Supply* accounted for the highest number of contacts regarding alleged breaches of the GS.

Figure 5: Guaranteed Standards Contacts

The GS reports submitted by the JPS and NWC did not reflect the alleged incidents of breaches reported to the OUR.

(iv) Utilities' Performance on Guaranteed Standards

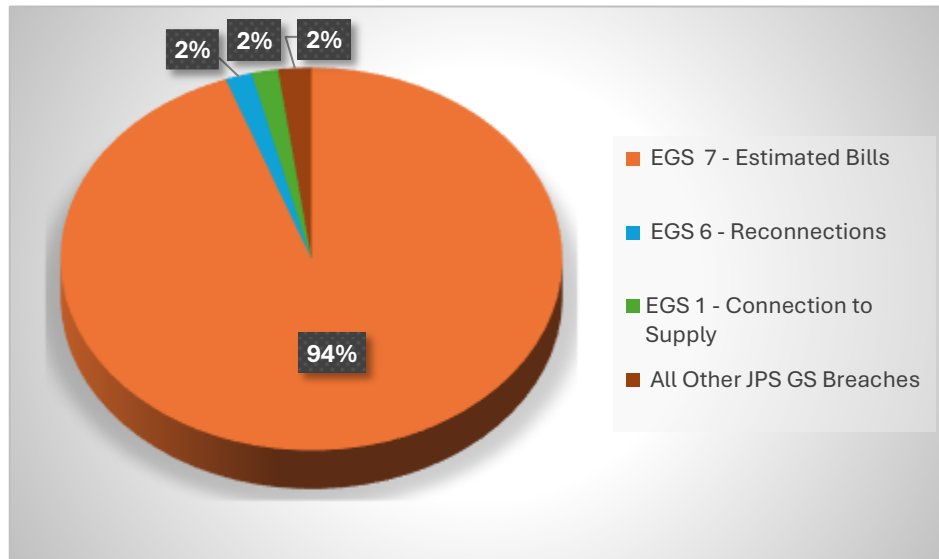
JPS

For the review period, JPS's compliance report on its GS performance indicated that 20,648 breaches were committed, representing a 13% increase when compared with the preceding period. These breaches attracted compensatory payments of approximately \$40.64 million. However, no compensatory payments were made for the breaches as JPS is awaiting the response from the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology (MSET) for Force Majeure relief (suspension) from the Guaranteed Standards for the period 2024 July 2 – August 12. JPS advised that the Force Majeure request to MSET was due to the impact of Hurricane Beryl on the Island which affected its ability to meet the GS.

Guaranteed Standards related to *Estimated Bills* (which restricts JPS from sending more than two consecutive estimates without a penalty), *Reconnection* (which requires that JPS restores supply within 24 hours of payment of overdue amounts) and *Connection to Supply* (which prescribes the time within which JPS is to make a simple connection) remained the standards that accounted for the highest incidents of

breaches (see Figure 6). These standards accounted for approximately 98% of breaches and 97% of compensatory payments.

Figure 6: JPS Reported GS Breaches



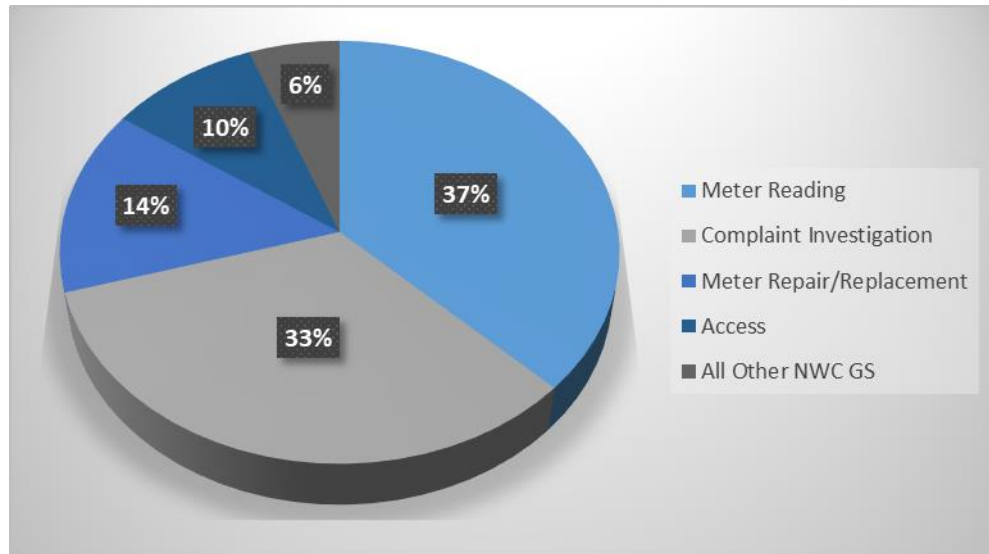
NWC

The NWC's Guaranteed Standards compliance report for the review period indicates that 3,987 breaches were committed during the review period, representing a 40% increase over the preceding period. These breaches had a potential payout of approximately \$18.53 million, while actual payments amounted to approximately \$5.26 million, or 28% of total potential payments, and were made through automatic credits to the affected accounts. The remaining 72% of potential payments not made include those breaches for which the affected customers did not submit the required claim forms for validation.

As shown in Figure 7, the standards with the highest incidents of breaches for the NWC were *Meter Reading* (which restricts the NWC from sending more than two consecutive estimates without a penalty), *Complaint Investigations* (which require the NWC to complete investigations and respond or provide an update within 30 working days of receipt of a complaint), *Meter Repair/Replacement* (which stipulates that defective meters are to be verified repaired/replaced within 20 working days), and

Access/New Service Connection (which requires NWC to connect a new supply within 10 working days). These four (4) standards represented 94% of total breaches.

Figure 6: NWC Reported GS Breaches



However, the standards that accounted for 96% of the total compensation paid were: Meter Reading (40%), Meter Repair/Replacement (35%) and Payment of Compensation (21%).

Private/Small Water and/or Sewerage Service Providers' Guaranteed Standards Report

In keeping with the provisions of their licenses and OUR Determination Notices, licensed Private/Small Water and/or Sewerage Service Providers (PWSSP) are required to submit quarterly reports on their Quality of Service (QoS) standards performance, which include the Guaranteed and relevant Overall Standards.

As is shown in Table 3, the PWSSP were generally compliant as six (6) of eight (8), representing 75%, submitted their QoS reports for the review period. However, only four (67%) reports were submitted within the stipulated timeline.

Table 3: Private/Small Water and Sewerage Service Providers' QoS Reporting Requirements and Submissions

Licensees to Submit Quarterly QoS Reports	2024 July - September	
	Due Date	Submission Date
Can-Cara Development Ltd. (CDL)	2024.11.12	2024.11.13
Dynamic Environmental Services Ltd. (DEML)		Not Received
Dairy Spring Ltd. (DSL)		2024.11.14
Landmark Developers Limited		Not Received
Runaway Bay Water Company Ltd (RBWC)		2024.11.12
Rosehall Development Ltd. (RDL)		2024.11.04
Richmond Environmental Services Ltd. (RESL)		2024.11.04
Tryall Golf and Beach Club (TGBC)		2024.11.12

Analysis of the quarterly GS reports received from the PWSSP indicates that no breaches were committed during the review period.

Chapter 4: Customer Contact Centre/Call Centre Performance Reports

In recognition of the important role of Customer Contact Centres (Call Centres) in customer service delivery, the OUR has deemed it necessary to include a report on the performance of the JPS and NWC Call Centres. Here, the focus is placed on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on general customer satisfaction levels for NWC and JPS, which includes their performance on First Call Resolution Rate (FCR).

NWC:

As seen in Table 5, the NWC Call Centre Report for the review period indicates a mixed performance in the KPIs measured when compared with the preceding quarter. The *Percentage Service Level* and First Call Resolution Rate increased by two and 11.17 percentage points, respectively. The *Average Speed of Answer* decreased by three seconds and *Percentage of Abandoned Calls* went down one percentage point. The averages for Average Talk Time and Average Length of Calls were for July and August only as the NWC advised that the data for September contained inaccuracies which are being investigated.

Table 4: NWC's Call Centre Performance

<i>KPIs</i>	<i>KPI Definition</i>	<i>2024 Performance</i>		
		Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul-Sept
<i>Average Speed of Answer²</i>	Average time for answering calls	0:00:22	0:00:11	0:00:08
<i>Average Talk Time</i>	Average time spent talking to customers	0:04:41	0:05:01	0:05:01**
<i>Average Length of Call (Call Handle Time)</i>	Combination of Average Talk Time, Average After Call Work and Hold Time	0:06:48	0:06:34	0:06:46**
<i>Percentage Service Level³</i>	Percentage of calls answered within 20	92%	94%	96%

² International Standard for the Average Speed of Answer is 20 seconds

³ International Standard for Percentage Service Level is 80% of calls answered within 20 seconds

	seconds			
<i>Percentage of Abandoned Calls</i>	Percentage of calls not serviced	1.22%	1.67%	0.67%
<i>First Call Resolution Rate⁴</i>	Customer's complaint/issue being resolved/solved at the first point of contact with the Call Centre	83%	89%	100%

JPS:

As seen in Table 6, the JPS Call Centre Report for the review period indicates increases in the time taken for *Average Speed of Answer*, *Average Talk Time* and *Average Length of Calls*. The *Percentage of Abandoned Calls* also increased by 4%. The Percentage Service Level and FCR decreased by five and .2 percentage points respectively.

Table 5: JPS Call Centre Performance

<i>KPIs</i>	<i>KPI Definition</i>	<i>2024 Performance</i>		
		Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul-Sept
<i>Average Speed of Answer</i>	Average time for answering calls	0:00:42	0:00:35	0:01:38
<i>Average Talk Time</i>	Average time spent talking to customers	0:05:19	0:05:02	0:05:18
<i>Average Length of Call (Call Handle Time)</i>	Combination of Average Talk Time, Average After Call Work and Hold Time	0:06:09	0:05:47	0:06:12
<i>Percentage Service Level</i>	Percentage of calls answered within 20	96%	96%	91%

⁴ Compliance Target set for NWC and JPS First Call Resolution Rate is 70%

** Represents the average for July and August only as the data for September showed inaccuracies that are being investigated

		seconds			
<i>Percentage of Abandoned Calls</i>	<i>of</i>	Percentage of calls not serviced	4%	3%	7%
<i>First Call Resolution Rate</i>	<i>Call</i>	Customer's complaint/issue being resolved/solved at the first point of contact with the Call Centre	81%	84%	83.8%

Chapter 5: Notification of Planned Outages Report

As part of their agreed Quality of Service Standards, the JPS and NWC must submit reports relating to their performance in notifying customers within a specified timeline about planned outages. This standard is a part of the Overall Standards for JPS (EOS 1) and the Performance Targets for the NWC.

JPS:

Under EOS 1, JPS must provide customers 48 hours (2 days) notice of planned outages. JPS reported a 37.7% compliance rating for this standard for September only, indicating that its performance for July and August was affected by Hurricane Beryl and is included in its Force Majeure Request submitted to MSET.

NWC:

The NWC performance targets provide for a 98% attainment rate for 12 hours' advance notification of planned service interruptions of no more than 4 hours. However, where a planned interruption is expected to last for more than four hours, the NWC must give advanced notice of at least 24 hours at a 90% attainment rate.

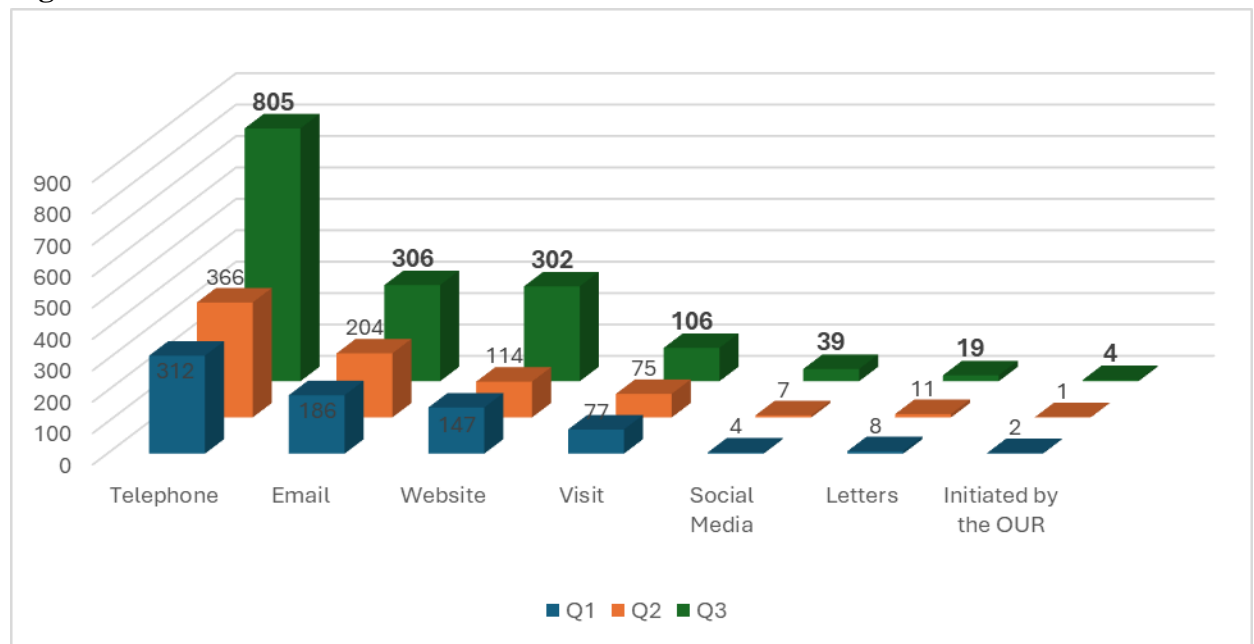
Based on the notifications to the public for outages lasting no more than 4 hours, the NWC attained a 67% compliance rating as two out of three relevant notices issued were issued within the established target.

For notifications exceeding four hours, the NWC also attained a compliance rating of 67% to provide at least 24 hours advance notice, which fell 23 percentage points short of the established target. Of the 18 related notifications received, 12 complied with the stated target.

Chapter 6: Customer Contact Distribution

The telephone at 51%, remained the most frequently used method for customers contacting the OUR. Emails, the OUR's website, and visits followed by 306 (19%), 302 (19%), and 106 (7%) respectively. Social media, letters, and contacts initiated by the OUR shared the remaining 62 (4%). The details are provided in Figure 8.

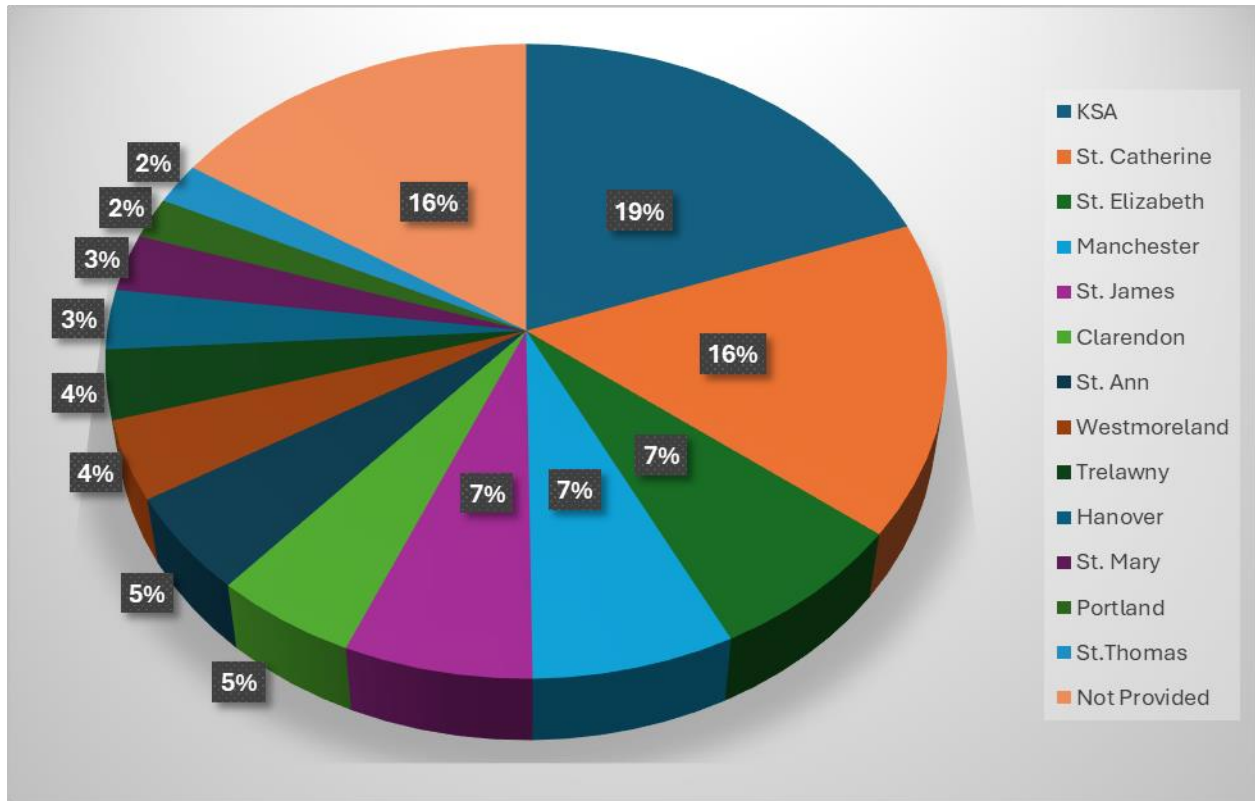
Figure 7: Methods of Contact



Geographical Distribution of Contacts

Kingston and St. Andrew and St. Catherine, at 19% and 16% respectively, continued to account for the most contacts. St. Elizabeth, Manchester and St. James followed with 7% each. Clarendon and St. Ann accounted for 5%. Westmoreland and Trelawny accounted for 4% each while all other parishes each had a share of 3% or less. Eighteen (16%) of the contacts received provided no information on their location/parish, or the information was not recorded. Details are provided in Figure 9.

Figure 8: Geographic Distribution of Contacts



Chapter 6: Appeals Performance

(i) Closure of Appeals⁵

Eleven (11) appeals were closed during the review period, with four and five being resolved in favour of the customer and the utility service providers respectively. One was resolved by mutual agreement while the other was withdrawn by the customer. Three (3), representing 27% of the closed appeals were resolved within the established sixty-five (65) working days while the remaining eight (8) were closed outside of the timeline.

Additionally, a correction needs to be made to the number of appeals that were closed for the April to June quarter. It was reported that twelve appeals were closed during the period, however, the correct number of appeals closed was five.

(ii) Outstanding Appeals⁶

At the end of the review period, eleven (11) appeals remained outstanding because they exceeded the established sixty-five (65) business days for resolution. Of these appeals, six (6) were awaiting OUR's action, while the NWC and JPS are to submit six (6) and one (1) response, respectively, for the remaining outstanding appeals.

JPS accounts for five (5) of the outstanding appeals, which relate to two (2) cases of equipment damage, one (1) property damage, and two (2) billing-related matters. The NWC accounts for the remaining six (6) outstanding appeals which all relate to billing matters.

Appeals Process Resolution Rate

Of the eleven (11) new appeals that were accepted for investigation, all relevant information was received for nine (9) within the established timeline, one (1) being received outside of the timeline and the remaining response remains outstanding. Follow-up actions were taken on two appeals based on the responses provided while the timeline for closing two of the appeals for which the responses were received had not expired.

⁵ Breakdown of Appeals Closures can be seen in Table 9 on page 29.

⁶ Breakdown of Outstanding Appeals can be seen in Table 10 on page 29.

Of the six responses for which all relevant information was received, final decisions were made and communicated to three (50%) customers (by way of Final Letters). The final decisions made were completed within the established 65 working days timeline. Further details on the CAU's performance on some key Appeals Process activities are provided in Table 10, Appendix I.

Chapter 7: Consumer Affairs Highlights

(i) Credits/Compensation

Through the OUR's intervention, \$1,375,455.85 was secured for utility consumers. Of this amount, NWC and JPS accounted for \$1,159,182.33 (84%) and \$159,591.81 (12%) respectively. The remaining \$56,681.71 (4%) was shared between Columbus Communications Limited (Flow) and C&WJ.

While \$270,682.89 (20%) of the total credits secured were recorded during the reporting period, they were applied to customers' accounts by the service providers in previous periods.

(ii) OUR's Decision on the NWC's Request for Suspension of Guaranteed Standards due to Hurricane Beryl

Following the passage of Hurricane Beryl on 2024 July 3, the NWC, on 2024 July 25, requested the suspension of five (5) GS for sixty (60) days, commencing August 1 for customers in seven (7) parishes. The NWC advised that the request was due to the significant impact of Hurricane Beryl on its operations in the parishes of St. Thomas, St. Catherine, Clarendon, Manchester, St. Elizabeth, Westmoreland, and Hanover.

To assist with its review, the OUR requested additional information from the NWC to justify its GS suspension submission. In its response, the NWC provided information on the general impact of Hurricane Beryl on its operations, including details on the impact on all parishes. The NWC also advised that it was still collecting data on the specific effects of its ability to meet the GS request for suspension. However, the data collected indicated a 34% increase in breaches of WGS 8 – Repair/Replacement of Faulty Meters, and 1,255% increase in breaches of WGS 10(a) – Meter Reading. Consequently, the NWC amended its GS suspension request and requested an immediate suspension of WGS 8 and WGS 10a for 60 days in the aforementioned seven parishes. The NWC also indicated that the information relating to the other GS for which the suspension was requested will be provided at a later date.

Based on the OUR's review of the NWC's request, the decisions made included:

(i) **WGS 8 – Repair/replacement of faulty meters**

The Office approved the suspension of WGS 8 only for 2024 July and the parish of St. Catherine, since based on the data, this is the only parish that accounted for the increased breaches in 2024 July.

(ii) **WGS 10(a) – Meter Reading**

The Office approved the suspension of WGS 10(a) for 2024 July for the parishes of St. Thomas, St. Catherine, Clarendon, Manchester, St. Elizabeth, and Westmoreland. the suspension of WGS 10 (a) does not apply to Hanover as there were no breaches.

Appendices:

Appendix I: List of Tables: 2024 April - June

Table 6: Contact Activity Summary (All Utilities)

	Description	JPS	NWC	C&WJ (FLOW)			Columbus		Digicel		Private Water Providers	Private Telecoms Providers	OUR/Other (Not Utility Provider Related)	Total
				Internet	Landline	Mobile	Internet	Landline	Internet	Mobile				
A	Contacts for the Quarter													
(i)	New Appeals	7	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
(ii)	New Complaints	409	91	89	7	16	85	7	12	8	2	4	0	730
(iii)	New Enquires	15	7	2	1	2	4	1	1	1	0	0	5	39
(iv)	New Opinions	4	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	8
(v)	New Referrals	473	154	19	1	23	80	8	6	5	6	0	18	793
	Total Contacts	908	256	111	10	41	170	16	19	14	8	4	24	1,581
B	Closure/Resolution of Appeals:													
(i)	Mutually Resolved	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
(ii)	Resolved in Favour of Customer	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
(iii)	Resolved in Favour of Utility	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
(iv)	Withdrawn by Customer	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Total Closures	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
C	Total Appeals from Previous Periods:													
	Outstanding Appeals with OUR													
(i)	Undergoing Analysis/Determination	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
(ii)	Awaiting Service Provider's Response	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
	Total Outstanding Appeals	5	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11

Table 7: Distribution of Contacts by Categories

Complaint Category	Service Providers									Total
	JPS	NWC	Digicel	C&WJ (FLOW)	Columbus Communications (Flow)	Small/Private Telecommunications Providers	Small/Private Water/Sewerage Providers	OUR/Other (Not Utility Related)		
Billing Matters	549	169	3	25	34	1	5	1		787
Broken Main	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0		2
Customer Service	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0		2
Disconnection	5	5	1	7	5	1	0	1		25
Equipment Damage	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		19
Guaranteed Standards	10	9	0	0	0	0	0	0		19
Health & Safety	16	0	0	0	1	0	0	0		17
Illegal Connections	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		4
Interruption of Service	230	22	16	72	112	1	0	9		462
Irregular Supply	23	9	0	0	0	0	1	0		33
Leak at Meter	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0		5
Metering	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0		2
Number Portability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Other	22	21	8	17	8	0	1	13		90
Payment Arrangement	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1
Phone Credit Depletion	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0		6
Poor Service Quality	9	6	2	8	10	0	0	0		35
Prepaid Metering Service	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		3
Property Damage	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		4
RAMI Service Connection	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		2
Rebate	0	1	2	13	8	0	0	0		24
Reconnection	1	3	1	1	0	0	0	0		6
Refund	2	0	0	3	2	0	0	0		7
Service Connection	4	1	0	1	4	0	0	0		10
Terms and Condition of Service	1	1	0	7	0	0	0	0		9
Unable to get through to Utility Provider	3	1	0	1	1	1	0	0		7
Total	908	256	33	162	186	4	8	24		1,581

Table 8: Distribution of Closed Appeals by Utilities

Appeal Category	Service Provider		Total
	JPS	NWC	
Billing Matters	0	9	9
Equipment Damage	2	0	2
Total	2	9	11

Table 9: Distribution of Appeals (Outstanding)

Appeal Category	Service Providers		Total
	JPS	NWC	
Billing Matters	2	6	8
Equipment Damage	2	0	2
Property Damage	1	0	1
Total	5	6	11

Table 10: CAU's Performance on Service Standards (New Appeals)

Activity	Service Standards	% Compliance	Comment
Acknowledgement of Appeals	Within two business days of receipt of customer's correspondence	64%	Seven of eleven new appeals were acknowledged within the established timeline.
Case Letters/ Other Utility Contact	Within five business days of acknowledging customer's correspondence	91%	Ten of eleven Case Letters were dispatched within the stipulated five business days.
Correspondence Copied to Customer	The customer is to be copied on all correspondence submitted to the utilities pertaining to their complaint	100%	
Final Response	Within the established timeline of receipt of all necessary information from relevant parties	50%	Final responses were prepared and dispatched within the established timeline for three of the six new appeals for which all relevant information was received.

Appendix II: List of Figures

- Figure 1: Distribution of Contacts per 100,000 of Customer Base
- Figure 2: Distribution of Billing Contacts per 100,000 of Customer Base
- Figure 3: Main Customer Concerns
- Figure 4: Quarterly Service Interruption Contacts
- Figure 5: Guaranteed Standards Contacts
- Figure 6: JPS Reported GS Breaches
- Figure 7: NWC Reported GS Breaches
- Figure 8: Methods of Contact
- Figure 9: Geographic Distribution of Contacts

Appendix III: Definition Of Terms Used In Documenting Customer Contacts

Appeal:	Any contact in which the utility company has completed an investigation into a customer's complaint, the customer remains dissatisfied with the outcome and writes to the OUR asking for an independent investigation of the matter.
Complaint:	Any contact from consumers who feel that particular action(s) of a utility service provider might have been in breach of their Terms and Conditions or might have been unfair to them. The OUR provides investigation for complaints as is necessary. Acceptance of complaints does not require submission of a written response from the service provider.
Customer Contact:	Any contact made to the OUR to register an appeal, inquiry, opinion, etc. Contact can be made through the telephone, post, electronic channels (emails, website, and Facebook page) and visits.
Enquiry:	Any contact requiring verification/confirmation of information relating to the OUR, a utility service, policy and/or practice, etc.
Equipment Damage:	Damage caused to customers' equipment as a result of alleged action or inaction of their service provider.
Interruption of Service:	Where no service is provided, usually for an extended period.
Irregular supply:	Where service is not provided regularly and in keeping with the Terms and Conditions of Service/Contract.
Opinion:	Any contact expressing a view about the actions, practice or terms of service, etc. of a utility company or the OUR.
Referral:	Any contact advised by the OUR to consult the relevant utility company because the complainant had not initially utilized or exhausted the complaint procedure within the relevant utility company.
Refund:	Amounts credited to customers' accounts for breaches of the service provider's Terms and Conditions of Service/Contract
Resolution:	Where the OUR communicates its decision on customers' appeals and complaints
Resolution Rate:	The percentage of resolutions that are made within the established timelines.

Appendix IV: Statement on Confidentiality of Telecommunications Service Provider Information

Information on the customer base of the telecommunication companies was used in some of the calculations contained in the QPR, pursuant to Section 7A of the Telecommunication Act – Amended. The referenced section states, in part:

“...the following information is not required to be regarded and dealt with as secret and confidential namely -

- (a) information that will facilitate customers in their choice of facilities or specified services and the development of the telecommunications industry; and
- (b) information relating to the –
 - (i) quality of service measurements;
 - (ii) prices charged to customers or to other licensees;
 - (iii) network coverage of licensees;
 - (iv) market share of licensees;
 - (v) volume of services of licensees however measured;
 - (vi) subscriber base of licensees; and
 - (vii) capacity and usage of international submarine cables

Appendix V: Appeals Process

The activities of utility companies are guided by “terms and conditions” within their license and/or Act. There are occasions, however, when consumers feel that particular action(s) of a utility company might have been in breach of the utility’s “terms and conditions” or might have been unfair to them. In such circumstances, the OUR is an avenue for recourse in having any such wrong investigated and addressed through our appeals process.

Prior to submitting an appeal to the OUR, consumers are expected and encouraged to first take the complaint, or issues giving rise to the complaint, up to the level of a senior officer at the respective utility company. The hearing of grievances is a consumer’s right and utilities are obliged to review such matters with the aim of having the issue addressed or clarified.

Appendix VI: CAU Internal Performance Standards

Process Timeline for General Appeals

<u>Description</u>	<u>Timelines</u>
Acknowledging correspondence & Assigning Appeal	2 (Two) working days
Case Letter Preparation	5 (Five) working days
Receive JPS’ Response/Update	30 working days ⁷
Review of Provider Response & prepare Follow-Up (F/U) Case letter or issue Directive (where necessary)	10 working days
Receive response to F/U Case Letter	5 (Five) working days
Review Response to F/U Case Letter	5 (Five) working days ⁸
Final Letter Preparation (Draft)	5 (Five) working days
Supervisor’s Review of Final Letter	2 (Two) working days
Dispatch Final Letter	1 working day
Total	65 working days

⁷ Where, based on exceptional circumstances, JPS requires additional time to provide the response to a Case Letter, same is to be communicated to the OUR within five (5) working days of the Case Letter date. The rationale for the additional time must be outlined in the request. The OUR will provide a response to the request within two (2) working days.

⁸ Subsequent to the review of the providers’ response to OUR’s Case Letter, Follow-up Case Letter or Directive issued, the appeal may be escalated to the Supervisor, Manager or Director and would then be treated as a Special Appeal.

Special Appeals

There are appeals that, based on the nature of the issue, may require expertise and/or resources that do not reside in the designated units of the OUR and JPS to effectively resolve same. Accordingly, the classification of “Special Appeals” was revised to provide additional time to both parties to complete their investigation of these matters.

Where necessary, an additional fifteen (15) working days is allotted to JPS to respond to Follow-up Case Letters sent by the OUR. These appeals will thereafter be reclassified as Special Appeals. The OUR has also reduced its consultation time to review Special Appeals from twenty (20) to fifteen (15) working days. Accordingly, the total time allotted to complete the review of a Special Appeal for JPS is at 95 working days

Recommended Service Levels

1. JPS is expected to respond to **OUR’s Case Letters** regarding customer’s appeals within **thirty (30) working days** of receipt. The company is also expected to acknowledge receipt of our Case Letters within five (5) working days of receipt.
2. JPS is expected to respond to the OUR’s follow-up case letter within five (5) working days of receipt for General appeals. However, where necessary, JPS shall notify the OUR within five (5) working days of receipt of the Follow-up Case letter that additional time is required to provide the response. Such Appeals shall then be reclassified as a Special Appeal with the JPS being allotted a total of twenty (20) working days to provide the response, from the date of the Follow-up Case Letter.
3. The OUR’s Final Letter to the customer is to be dispatched within **eighteen (18) working days** of receipt of utilities’ response (where no Follow-up Case Letter was sent). JPS will be provided with a copy of the Final Letter.
4. The OUR is expected to complete investigations of JPS appeals within the following timelines:
 - **Sixty-five (65) working days** for GENERAL APPEALS (which do not require external consultation)
 - **Ninety-five (95) working days** for Equipment Damage Appeals (which do not require external consultation)
5. The utility company is to extend the hold on the customer’s account for thirty **(30) days** subsequent to receiving OUR’s final response to allow the customer to make arrangements for the balances that are outstanding and/or give the customer time to appeal to the Director – Consumer & Public Affairs.

Appendix VII: Process Timelines for NWC Appeals

<u>Description</u>	<u>Timelines</u>
Acknowledging correspondence & Assigning Appeal	2 working days
Case Letter Preparation	5 working days

Receive NWC's Response/Update	30 working days
Review of Provider Response & prepare Follow-Up (F/U) Case letter or issue Directive (where necessary)	10 working days
Receive response to F/U Case Letter	5 working days
Review Response to F/U Case Letter	5 working days ⁹
Final Letter Preparation (Draft)	5 working days
Supervisor's Review of Final Letter	2 working days
Dispatch Final Letter	1 working day
Total	65 working days

Special Appeals

There are appeals that, based on the nature of the issue, may require expertise and/or resources that do not reside in the designated units of the OUR and NWC to effectively resolve same. Accordingly, the classification of "Special Appeals" was revised to provide additional time to both parties to complete their investigation of these matters.

Where necessary, an additional five (5) working days is allocated to the NWC to respond to Follow-up Case Letters sent by the OUR. These appeals will thereafter be reclassified as Special Appeals. The OUR has also reduced its time to review Special Appeal from twenty (20) to fifteen (15) working days; thereby retaining the completion timeline for Special Appeals at 85 working days.

Other Appeals Activities:

Monthly reports detailing the appeals for which the responses are outstanding will be generated and sent to the NWC. Where the responses/updates are not received within ten (10) working days of submission of the report, the matter will be escalated to the Vice President – Investment and Performance Monitoring, NWC, for action. Similarly, the CAU will provide NWC with a monthly update on appeals for which our responses are outstanding.

As a consequence, the following are the proposed Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to which the utility companies will be accountable. It is being recommended that the following be agreed upon by all parties and published:

⁹ Subsequent to the review of the providers' response to OUR's Case Letter, Follow-up Case Letter or Directive issued, the appeal may be escalated to the Supervisor, Manager or Director and would then be treated as a Special Appeal.

Recommended Service Levels

NWC is expected to respond to OUR's Case Letters regarding customer's appeals within **thirty (30) working days** of receipt. The Commission is also expected to acknowledge receipt of our Case Letters within five (5) working days.

NWC is expected to respond to the OUR's follow-up case letter within **FIVE (5) working days of receipt for General appeals**. However, where necessary, the NWC shall notify the OUR within FIVE (5) working days of receipt of the Follow-up Case letter that additional time is required to provide the response. Such Appeals shall then be reclassified as a Special Appeal with the NWC being allotted a total of ten (10) working days to provide the response, from the date of the Follow-up Case Letter.

The OUR's Final Letter to the customer is to be dispatched within **EIGHTEEN (18) working days** of receipt of the NWC's response (where no Follow-up Case Letter was sent). The NWC will be provided with a copy of the Final Letter.

The OUR is expected to complete investigations of NWC appeals within the following timelines:

- **SIXTY-FIVE (65) working days** for GENERAL APPEALS (which do not require external consultation)
- **EIGHTY-FIVE (85) working days** for SPECIAL APPEALS (Appeals which require external consultation)

The Utility company is to extend the hold on the customer's account for thirty **(30) days** subsequent to receiving OUR's final response to allow the customer to make arrangements for the balances that are outstanding and/or give the customer time to appeal to the Director – Consumer & Public Affairs.

Appendix VIII: List of Acronyms

Can Cara	-	Can Cara Development Limited (Water & Sewerage Provider)
CPA	-	Consumer and Public Affairs Department (OUR)
CAU	-	Consumer Affairs Unit (OUR)
DEML	-	Dynamic Environmental Management Limited (Water and Sewerage Provider)
Dekal	-	Dekal Wireless Ltd. (Telecommunications Provider)
Flow Service	-	Columbus Communications Jamaica Ltd. (Flow) - Telecommunication Provider
FLOW	-	Cable & Wireless Jamaica Ltd. (C&WJ) Flow
JPS	-	Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd. (Electricity Provider)
KSA	-	Kingston & St. Andrew
NWC	-	National Water Commission (Water & Sewerage Provider)
OUR	-	Office of Utilities Regulation
OURIC	-	Office of Utilities Regulation Information Centre
The Office	-	Comprises 6 members and is headed by a Chairman with the Director General serving as an <i>ex officio</i> member